

T. Goodby

A
SEASONABLE ADDRESS,

TO THOSE

Who receive the TESTIMONY of
EMANUEL SWEDENBORG:

CONTAINING

An Examination of the AUTHORITY upon
which *human Establishments* are imposed,

A N D

Subscriptions and Submission to them required
from the CLERGY.

OCCASIONED BY THE

Plain Church of England Man's LETTER and
Vindication of it upon that Subject.

By a SIMPLE LAYMAN.

L O N D O N:

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SEASONABLE ADDRESS, &c.

BRETHREN,

1. **N**O sooner have the manifestations of divine mercy appeared to us in these latter days, opening the internal sense of the word in the doctrines of the New Jerusalem Theology; but the *Dragon* is ready to devour the *Man-child* with the same arts and malice which he opposed to the first promulgation of the Gospel; and every attempt afterwards to restore its purity, upon the lamentable falling away in the primitive church, and the confirmed apostacy under *Antichrist*, previous to the reformation; and since that event took place, he has constantly opposed to it the worldly and political maxims of human establishments, by which professed Christians are at this time generally governed.

2. A slight acquaintance with ecclesiastical history,

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tory, will discover the arts whereby that old serpent, which was from the beginning, has established, and yet maintains his kingdom of this world, in opposition to the kingdom of our Lord; for as the Pharisees and Sadducees of old were the instruments whom he stirred up to oppose the first publication of the Gospel, so their successors in every age since have thwarted every attempt to restore its original practice, and every manifestation in these latter days which the Lord has vouchsafed to give us, of the time and manner of his second coming.

3. We learn from the first accounts of Christianity, in the Acts of the Apostles, that it had no sooner been published among the heathen nations, but a set of zealots insisted upon the necessity of imposing circumcision and the observation of Jewish rituals upon the Heathen converts, for which pretension they had more warrant than any of the partizans since in favour of human impositions, there being express scripture to countenance such an attempt; yet how firmly does the great Apostle of the Gentiles oppose those impositions upon conscience, not giving place, no not for an hour, but rebuking Peter to his face for temporizing in that respect; and charges the new converts to stand fast in the liberty

berty with which Christ had made them free; while he proves from the spiritual sense of those scriptures in question, that those rituals for which they so zealously contended, were only shadows of a better dispensation, opened to mankind in the Gospel then published.

4. The total abolition of Jewish policy at the destruction of Jerusalem, put a final period to this dispute, and the persecution which followed under the Heathen Emperors, kept under this spirit of imposition during those times of tribulation; for although the Apostles Creed is most comprehensive, and the least liable to objections of any, we do not find it imposed, and a subscription to it required, as a necessary qualification for the ministry during that period; but rather tacitly acquiesced in, as a formulary of the Christian faith, to which no objection had been made since the times of the Apostles.

5. The persecutions were no sooner over, and a worldly establishment given to Christianity under the first Christian Emperor, but the Pharisaic spirit manifested itself among the Ecclesiastics of that time, in the impositions upon conscience, and application of odious names to such as opposed their innovations; which evils
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were greatly countenanced by the authority of some, who had been confessors in the time of persecution; and cabals were formed in the Emperor's court, where they were honoured with a free access; so that a council was convened at Nice, wherein the Nicene Creed was composed, after a series of most unchristian wrangling, and a subscription required to it, as the qualification for exercising ecclesiastical functions, instead of that simplicity of spirit, and purity of life, which had been before that period accounted the best qualification.

6. Such a proceeding was by no means calculated to suppress any of the disputes or heresies then complained of, as the impositions upon conscience, and the violence with which some were treated, gained them followers, who persecuted the imposers in their turn, when they had acquired power under the succeeding Emperors, so that a scandal was brought upon the Gospel by such violent proceedings; and when the abettors of the first imposition finally prevailed, the Athanasian Creed was added to the Nicene, as a farther test of orthodoxy, being a yet greater deviation from Gospel simplicity, and the general formulary of our profession in the Apostles Creed,

Creed, than that which had been imposed by the Council of Nice.

7. If it should be urged, that these tests were necessary to keep unfit persons out of the ministry, it is manifest from history that they had a quite contrary effect, in the total apostacy which followed, while Ecclesiastics had the effrontery to call themselves orthodox, and Catholics, who professed a belief in these creeds, and yet made void the Law of God, by their traditions, worse than the Pharisees of old, practising and countenancing the grossest idolatry and superstition, while they prohibited the translation of scripture into the vulgar tongues, and the reading of such books as might instruct the common people in that deplorable state of ignorance, to which they were fallen before the reformation.

8. This triumph of truth over apostacy was not effected by making new Creeds, Confessions, and Articles, ~~of~~ ^{or} the imposition of old ones, as the necessary conditions of salvation, but by translating the Scriptures and books of practical divinity into the common languages, or publishing such exhortations, or complaints of apostacy, (like that of Pierce the ploughman) as were proper to open the people's eyes, and wean them
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from the papal superstitions; or writing short tracts of instruction, adapted to the common apprehensions and state of religion at that time, to which employment scholars and divines were excited, by the divine mercy of the Lord, notwithstanding the impositions then in force, to which they had submitted before they were better informed, and were now treated as apostates by the adherents of Antichrist, who called into their assistance the secular power of the state, condemning several to the flames as the worst of heretics, and fixed upon these faithful labourers in the Lord's harvest the odious name of Lollards, as if they were sowers of tares among the good seed in his field of the church, while they were, according to the divine sense of his own explanation upon that parable, The reapers who were gathering together the tares to the downfal and destruction of apostacy, while they secured the wheat in his granary, by supplying the spiritual wants of his people with seasonable publications, in a language which they could read and understand.

9. It could not have been imagined, after the experience of former times, that the reformed church thus emerging through the steady opposition to human injunctions, shewn by her first martyrs

martyrs and confessors, out of spiritual darkness and bondage, worse than that of the Israelites, should so soon have lusted after the flesh-pots of Egypt, the leeks, the onions, and the garlick of human inventions, to the loathing of that spiritual manna, the word of the Lord, which was then enjoyed freely: but so it was, that the Dragon stood ready to devour the Man-child which the Church then brought forth; and not only the former Creeds were imposed, but also several Articles, in which the doctrine of atonement was enforced, and justification by faith alone, to the depreciation of God's commandments; together with the abominable tenets of Predestination; to all which impositions, by mere human authority, a subscription is required from the Clergy.

10. Upon an examination of the pretensions on which these impositions are founded, it appears that the Nicene Creed was produced by the wrangling and ambition of Ecclesiastics, who had departed from the primitive simplicity, and began to form cabals at the court of an Emperor, who laboured in vain to reconcile their differences; and the power which he gave them by an edict to meet for that end, was employed for no better a purpose than to compose and enforce a subscription to this Creed, in direct con-

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tradition to that Christian Liberty which the Apostle of the Gentiles contends for, when he blames the Galatians for submitting to the impositions of men, who had the literal sense of the ritual law in their favour: notwithstanding this circumstance, he brands a submission to their decisions with the charge of receiving another Gospel.

11. The Athanasian Creed has a yet shallower pretence to be imposed upon the consciences of Christians, being the production of an individual Ecclesiastic, or at most of a private cabal, being in some passages contradictory to the Lord's assertion, that the Father of whom Philip enquired was *Himself*; whereas they are here distinguished by a personal dividuality, and the adorable mystery of the Trinity, which is incomprehensible to the human understanding, according to one part of this Creed, is defined with the same temerity as a common mathematical figure. The damatory clauses by which this doctrine is enforced, sufficiently discover the spirit which produced it, and made Archbishop Tillotson, as it is generally reported, wish we were fairly rid of the Creed altogether.

12. The doctrine of Atonement is founded on
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the supposed personal dividuality in the Divine Essence which is maintained in the above Creed, together with a misapplication of those Scriptures where the Apostles are proving, that the customary sacrifices prescribed by the Ritual Law, or offered to idols in the times of Heathen superstition, were abolished by the manifestation of the Gospel; for the flesh and blood which the Lord offered up for the redemption of mankind are spiritual, according to his own explication of the terms, when the Jews, not comprehending how he could give them his flesh to eat, and his blood to drink, he said, " It is the spirit that quickneth, the flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I speak, they are spirit and they are life." Plainly intimating, that the word of his Gospel, and truth of his doctrine, confirmed by his blood and sufferings on the cross, should be offered to all men for their salvation, by turning such as received the offer of these inestimable communications, to repentance and newness of life: for the support of which spiritual life, he has left them this spiritual meat and drink, contained in the word of his Gospel and the truth of his doctrine, instituting a memorial of both at the Paschal Supper, in the symbols of bread and wine: these having a like reference to his

divine goodness and truth, in the internal sense of the word, or to the abuse of those mercies vouchsafed to us, in an opposite sense; as when fulness of bread is ascribed to Sodom, and the wine of fornication to mystical Babylon.

13. The doctrine of Justification by Faith alone, is founded upon a total mistake of the Apostle's meaning, when he argues against the observation and enforcement of mere rituals as a condition of salvation; but this tenet makes void, in a manner, the obligations we are under to observe and keep the moral law in the ten Commandments; and hence Faith is made of more importance than Charity, although the Apostle who is made the patron of this false doctrine, has given Charity the pre-eminence, and particularly defined it as a disposition of the mind, exciting those whom it influences to universal benevolence, and every good work which may adorn our Christian profession.

14. The abominable doctrine of Predestination is founded on a like perversion of the Apostle's sense, as that of Justification by Faith only, and a total mistake of the whole tenor and drift of his argument, by applying what he advances upon the rejection of the Jews as a people, for their

their obliquity, and admission of Heathen nations to the privileges of the Gospel, upon their obedience, for the diabolical purpose of instituting a particular doctrine, in which individual Christians are supposed to be saved or reprobated, without any respect to the good or evil deeds which they have done; which horrid supposition alone is enough to call in question the lawfulness of requiring a subscription to these Articles, or the propriety of urging them for the support of any charge, such as that which has been exhibited against the Translator of True Christian Religion. There are other injunctions to which subscription and declarations are required, of less importance: but the imposition even of indifferent things upon conscience, can only be maintained on a supposition, that the church in which they are required, has obtained a temporal establishment and revenues, for the enjoyment of which certain qualifications may be thought necessary, as conducive to the order and peace of society, and not acting as restraints upon conscience; being confined to ceremonies, and the decent celebration of public worship.

15. Supposing the Church of England to have such an establishment, with a power to decide in ceremonies

ceremonies as indifferent things, which is the utmost claim contended for in the Preface to her Common-prayer by the compilers; these doctrines of the Articles are impositions upon conscience, not to be classed among indifferent things, they being contrary to Christian liberty, and the manifest sense of Scripture, as we have observed above: consequently, a subscription to those doctrines can be no farther obligatory on Clergymen in matters of conscience, than the strict profession of the law as a Pharisee, obliged St. Paul to regard their decisions when he was converted; nor could that circumstance hinder him from claiming the civil privileges both of a Pharisee and Roman citizen before his judges. Neither could the engagements which scholars and divines had submitted to, under the papal apostacy, oblige them, when better informed, to desist from those measures which they took to instruct the ignorant common people, previous to the reformation.

16. For it ought well to be remembered, that the temporal revenues of the Church were not given for the purpose of supporting any of the impositions above-mentioned, but annexed to the cure of souls; and it is well worth a Clergyman's serious consideration to remember, that of all the obligations

obligations which he takes upon him, the principal charge annexed to a benefice is the care of souls, to which every other consideration is, or ought to be subservient: and as the account he must give of this charge will be to the Lord, and not man; no man, nor body of men, may judge of his motives or conduct, in the execution of this important office, without some degree of presumption, while he acts upon the principles of St. Paul, and the first Reformers; yielding to popular prejudices, as the Apostle did in the ritual of purification at Jerusalem, for the sake of peace; and he was so far from being ashamed of it, that he made that compliance a part of his defence before the council, and glories in that part of the Christian character, that he became all things to all men, if by any means he might save some. In like manner the first Reformers thought themselves obliged to countenance some superstitions of their times, that they might give less occasion of scandal to the ignorant people, and more effectually recommend the study of those scriptures and practical treatises, which they had translated and published for their instruction, at the hazard of their lives, as this was done in direct opposition to injunctions then in force, both civil and ecclesiastical.

17. There is yet a greater obligation upon the consciences of Clergymen who have received orders in our Church, which is the solemn declaration they make, that they are moved by the Holy Ghost to take upon themselves that office of the ministry, and it may excite our wonder why a declaration of such high importance should not be mentioned among others, so industriously collected by a Plain Church of England Man: but the reason is evident; for "*as the wind bloweth where it listeth, so is the motion of the Holy Spirit;*" which is not subject to the controul of human injunctions, but operates upon the consciences of those who are subject to its influences, producing in their minds its divine gifts and graces, which may be known by their genuine fruits in their words and actions, as easily as grapes and figs are distinguished from the produce of thorns and thistles, according to the Lord's observation in his Gospel.

18. No solid reason can therefore be given why a Clergyman who has made such a declaration, and is in the legal possession of a benefice, with the care of souls, should not translate, write, and publish such treatises of divinity, as he judges in his conscience most conducive to the welfare of his flock; for herein he but copies
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after the example of our first Reformers. There is less reason why simple Laymen (such as the Author of this Treatise, and the generality of readers to whom it is addressed) should be deterred the reading of translations from the illuminated *Emanuel Swedenborg's* writings, for their instruction in the spiritual sense of holy scripture, as these are not imposed upon the consciences of any one, but left to their own evidence on the minds of such as peruse them: for although the noble author of the New-Jerusalem doctrine was compleatly learned, as he was highly illuminated, he was yet so far governed by the spirit of order, as neither to interest the civil powers where he resided, in the support of his doctrine, nor did he invade the office of the priesthood, nor constituted himself the head of a party, or leader of a sect, to the destruction of peace and charity; being content to publish, at a great expence and in a learned language, his divine illuminations, which were scarcely known before his decease: and in this respect he has left behind him an example of humility and modesty worthy of imitation by scholars and divines of every denomination, how high soever their attainments in learning and divinity may be estimated, or however usefully their talents may be

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employed; whether to the advancement of natural and experimental knowledge, in which he was eminently employed, or the illustration of holy scripture, and enforcement of its divine authority; in which office, like a scribe well instructed for the kingdom of Heaven, he hath brought out of his treasures things both new and old.

19. Such was the character of *Emanuel Swedenborg*, which the writer who styles himself a *Plain Church of England-man* has attacked, by quoting his translator, and annexing to one of his quotations a silly *egotism*, which may shew his reading, but is altogether foreign in a serious subject. We shall therefore review his arguments, and refer to the quotations, continuing the comparison between those impositions which the *Plain Church of England-man* is so zealous to support, and the *New Jerusalem doctrine*: for this indecent attack both upon Emanuel Swedenborg and his translator, could not fail of bringing the matter to an issue; wherein the *Plain Church of England-man's* arrogant claims will be further investigated, and the partizans for supporting them must either condemn the practice of St. Paul, and our first Reformers, or urge their pretensions with more modesty and decency for the future.

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20. We therefore join issue with the *Plain Church of England-man*, and shall try the merits of the cause upon those doctrines of the Trinity and the Atonement, which he has so confidently chosen to defend in the parallel passages; premising, however, as a matter of special importance in the case, that the point in question here, is not what any body of men have imposed, or what any reverend Clergyman has declared, but what warrant there is for such impositions, and how far a conscientious Clergyman is bound to countenance such impositions, when he is better informed, than he was on first submitting to them; and why he may not take the same methods which our first Reformers made use of, to communicate that information to others which he has received. The duty which a conscientious Clergyman owes to God, to his neighbour, to society, and the flock committed to his charge, leave him without any alternative in this respect, and he is bound by all these ties to make known whatever he judges may advance the honour of God, the good of his neighbour, the welfare of society, and, by consequence, that of the congregation committed to his charge; all which considerations are sufficient to establish the propriety of limiting the question, so far as it re-

spects the conduct of any reverend Clergyman; we shall therefore proceed to an investigation of the doctrines, and the authorities produced in defence of them. The first is that of the Trinity.

21. We have so far anticipated the matters here to be discussed, as to have already observed that the Athanasian Creed was the composition of an individual, or at the most of a private cabal, being imposed on the church contrary to Christian liberty, as the Nicene Creed had been before, though it proceeded from no better a spirit than the wrangling and ambition of Ecclesiastics: both Creeds less comprehensive than that of the Apostles, both productive of strife and division, being also imposed and supported by human establishments in the times of apostacy.

22. The conclusion from these premises will then justify both the Translator and his original, where it is asserted in the passages quoted under this head, " That the Nicene Creed and Athanasian doctrine concerning a Trinity, have together given birth to a faith which hath entirely overturned the Christian church; and hence is come that abomination of desolation, and that affliction, such as was not in all the world, neither
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“ *shall be*; which the Lord hath foretold in *Daniel*,” and the *Evangelists*, and the *Revelations*.

23. “ Hence too it is come to pass, that, unless a new Heaven and a new Church be established by the *Lord*, no flesh can be saved. To introduce into the Church a belief that there are Three Persons, whereof each singly and by himself is God, and of the same essence; and One born from eternity; and a Third proceeding from eternity, is utterly to destroy the idea of God’s unity, and thus to banish all rational spirituality from the human soul.”

24. “ It is the case from henceforward with all worship which is directed towards a Trinity of Persons, and not to a Trinity joined in One Person, that such prayers are henceforth not attended to, but are in heaven like ill-scented odours, or like eruptions from corrupted lungs. They offend against the first Commandment, who are self-persuaded into the belief of three divine persons actually existing from eternity: such people, in proportion as they confirm themselves in that error, become more and more natural and corporeal; in which case they have no capacity inwardly to comprehend

"prehend any divine truth." So far the quoted translation.

25. There cannot be a more direct proof of the assertion contained in the concluding passage of this quotation, than the method here taken to invalidate so strong a chain of reasoning, by opposing to it parallel passages taken from Creeds, declarations, and the Liturgy, not producing one text of scripture, nor the shadow of an argument to prove the doctrine in question, or to justify the authority by which the Creeds that maintain it are imposed, contrary to the liberty with which Christ has made us free from the power of human traditions and worldly establishments. The *Plain Church of England-man*, indeed, seems to think the force of this conclusion is evaded in his preparatory argument, by which not only a reverend Clergyman, but also the word of the Lord is supposed to be tied down to human decisions; much like Sampson, when he was delivered up by his brethren the men of Judah into the hands of the Philistines, bound with two new cords: but mark what followed—When the Philistines gave a shout of triumph on receiving Sampson, the Spirit of the Lord came upon him, and the cords that were upon his arms became as flax that was burnt with fire, for the bands were loosed from

from his hands. We have little doubt, but as there is a similitude of circumstances, a like consequence will follow upon the investigation of this argument, which we shall first state, and then examine.

26. The author, in his letter of exhortation, had roundly asserted in effect, that a reverend Clergyman, upon his ordination, had submitted to receive the scriptures in that sense which the Church has thought proper to explain them, without any qualification to limit the palpable absurdity of such an assertion; but in page 25th of his Vindication, towards the bottom, he states a difficulty which arises from different interpretations of scripture. *This being given by the inspiration of God*, must have, as he affirms, some one true, undoubted, and consistent sense and meaning; and, to avoid *a strife of words*, he fixes upon a well-known and allowed interpretation of scripture, to prevent critical enquiry and verbal disputes; and on this ground opposes Canons, Articles, Creeds and Declarations, instead of Scripture, to the doctrine of E. Swedenborg; which was the short method of ending disputes taken by the Pharisees of old, and all abettors of the papal apostacy to this present time. But there is a novelty in his argument which they never
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thought of advancing, where he insinuates an idea of the Scriptures, as confined to one true, undoubted, and consistent sense and meaning; whereas they are in fact capable of receiving innumerable very true, undoubted, and consistent meanings and explications, of which the history of Abraham's two sons is a remarkable instance.

27. We have selected this history, because it is explained by St. Paul according to the internal sense, in the Epistle to the Galatians, which he wholly employed in arguments against the impositions then contended for by the Jewish Zealots. These men called themselves the Church at that time, and gloried in being descended from Abraham by his son Isaac, having the city of Jerusalem in their possession; and hence they claimed by descent to be heirs of the promises, applying to themselves all the prophecies in favour of that holy city: but the Apostle pronounces this history to be an allegory, and draws from it a meaning very different from the literal sense, in the application, where Hagar the mother of Ishmael, was first a representative of mount Sinai, from whence the ritual law was divulged, which they were for imposing; and then of Jerusalem, at the time when he was writing the epistle, where he asserts, that the promises were made to another Jerusalem, namely, to the
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then Christian Church, though it consisted chiefly of Heathen converts. This Church, represented by Sarah the mother of Isaac, the Apostle declared was the Jerusalem from above, and free from their impositions, which, under the figure of Hagar, can only gender to bondage, and are rejected out of the Christian dispensation in the application of that passage from the history, where it was said, *Cast out the bond-woman and her son, for the son of the bond-woman shall not inherit with the son of the free-woman:* and again at the conclusion, where the Apostle says, *So we, brethren, are not the sons of the bond-woman, but of the free-woman.* That is, we as Christians owe no subjection, in matters of conscience, to human injunctions, they being contrary to the essential privileges of the Gospel. Such was the internal sense of this history, when St. Paul wrote his epistle; and the meaning is so far from being bounded by his exposition, that it is applicable to every state of the Church since; where a worldly spirit has prevailed, and changed Christianity into human establishments, while the disinterested few who have endeavoured to restore its primitive spirit, have been generally ill-treated by their fellow-citizens; to which circumstance that passage in the allegory is truly

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applicable, *He that was born after the flesh, persecuted him that was born after the spirit.* Such is the word of the Lord; ever true, and always fulfilling, yet perfectly consistent. How vain then is the attempt to confine it within the narrow limits of Creeds, Canons, Articles, Subscriptions, and Declarations, or even in the compass of our excellent Liturgy, the compilers of which allowed it to be the composition of fallible men, and alterable according to the circumstances of the Church.

28. Having thus examined the *Plain Church of England-man's* preparatory argument, and shewn the absurdity of attempting to confine or limit the sense of holy scripture, by any system of doctrines, we shall pass on to the other point in issue between him and the Translator of Emanuel Swedenborg, which is the Doctrine of Atonement; in the support of which he has so weakly managed the parallel, as to produce nothing under that head which may invalidate the quoted translations, but declarations, and passages from the Articles, Liturgy, and Creeds; omitting that of the Apostles, as not mentioning one word of the Atonement, nor countenancing impositions upon conscience: so that if the proof of this doctrine had rested upon his defence, it would by
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no means have come to a fair decision; but as he has called in the aid of our pious Diocesan, whose character we honour, we hold it our duty to respect such an authority, not dictating to conscience, but by reason and scripture endeavouring to illustrate a doctrine of the established Church, consistent with his high station and general good character; which might have been employed with more propriety, than to countenance this outrageous attack upon the meekest lamb of his flock, while it exposes the least defensible part of our establishment to the sneers of unbelievers, and the depredations of sectaries: an establishment in which we were born, baptized, and educated, in the communion of which we yet continue; not knowing any community of Christians, whose worship and ceremonies are, upon the whole, less liable to exception.

29. Thus much being premised, we shall, with all due humility, in the exercise of our common Christian liberty, examine the scriptures quoted by Bishop Porteous for the support of this doctrine. The first passage from Isaiah is indeed literally verified in the passion and crucifixion of Christ; but when it is here said, "*The Lord laid upon him the iniquity of us all,*" a question na-

turally occurs, which the Scribes and Pharisees could never answer, namely, how, or in what respect, the sacred Character here suffering, is called in many other passages of the scripture, *The Lord our Redeemer*; and when his wonderful birth is foretold, why, among his other titles, he is called *The everlasting Father*; why David in the spirit calls him *Lord*; or why he is called in the New Testament the *Lord of life*; and that passage of the Psalms applied to him expressly as the Son, where it is said, *Thou, Lord, in the beginning, hast laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the work of thine hands*: or why Christ affirms of himself to Philip, in this state of humiliation, that whoever had seen him had seen the Father; and speaks of himself in his dispute with the Jews, as the I AM, by which JEHOVAH signified his name to Moses in the Old Testament.

30. While a dividuality of persons in the divine Essence is contended for, as of the Father who is angry and condemns, and of the Son who intercedes and atones for us, the difficulty of reconciling these texts with other passages in the Scriptures, is unsurmountable: but if it is asserted, on the authority of these Scriptures, that the Lord himself who created us, assumed the
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humanity to redeem mankind, there is a perfect consistency between the above cited Scriptures and the whole tenor of that prophecy.

31. The other texts quoted for the support of this doctrine, are from the New Testament, and their whole import is summed up in the concluding passage, "*That we are redeemed by Christ: purchased and bought with the price of his blood.*" Which expressions had a meaning very properly adapted to the notions common at that time both to Jews and Heathens, that without shedding of blood there was no remission; and hence the literal sense of such passages was accommodated to their gross apprehensions. In like manner the angel Gabriel accommodated his message to the apprehension of Mary the mother of Christ, when he said, the Son whom she should conceive by the overshadowing of the Highest, should *sit upon the throne of David his father*: and the Lord himself accommodates his expressions to the common expectation and notions which the Jews had of a temporal kingdom, when he so often makes mention of his kingdom, calling his doctrine the Gospel of the kingdom, and the kingdom of Heaven. Hence arose the strife among his disciples, who should have the chief places in his kingdom, they still expecting it to be temporal, and

and their enquiry after his resurrection, whether he would then erect it; to which he returned an answer more calculated to check their curiosity, than to remove that prejudice.

32. In like manner the language of Scripture is accommodated to the general apprehension of those times, when it is said we are redeemed by Christ; purchased, and bought with the price of his blood: that his body was broken for us, and his blood shed for us; which is true, in fact: but the mistake, in the matter of Atonement, lies in supposing these to be natural and corporeal, whereas they are spiritual and divine; being the word of his Gospel, and the truth of his doctrine, according to his own explication; which are the very support of our spiritual life, and fully competent to effect every purpose of his divine mercy for our redemption, justification, and salvation.

33. We shall not oppose to the worthy Bishop's defence of this doctrine, those quotations from the translation of *True Christian Religion*, which are introduced under this head in the *Plain Church of England-man's* vindication, as these doctrines are not imposed upon the consciences of any one, either Clergy or Laymen, in which case

case there is much less reason to require miracles for their support, than for the support of those impositions which we have been examining; and if miracles had been wrought for the promulgation of the New Jerusalem doctrine, they would have rendered it suspicious, as the Lord foretold false prophets would come, and shew *signs and wonders, so as, if it were possible, to deceive the very elect*; and Antichrist is said to come *with signs and lying wonders*. The Beast also in the Revelations is said to work great miracles, so as to bring down *fire from Heaven upon the earth* in the sight of his worshippers, so that all the world wonders after the Beast. There is a yet further circumstance in favour of these doctrines, that they were none of them particularly leveled at our public worship, but, on the contrary, the author pronounces it to be more internal than that of other nations, quoting, as an instance, one of the exhortations in the communion service; so that the attempt to represent his writings as particularly opposed to our common prayers, is an insult on his memory which he little deserved.

34. We intreat and exhort you, therefore, brethren, to keep in mind this testimony of Emanuel

manuel Swedenborg, in favour of our Liturgy, which being confessedly a human establishment, must be imperfect; and remember the Lord's counsel, not to root up the tares, lest the good seed should also be rooted up with them. We have seen the bad consequences of neglecting this advice, in the multiplicity of separate congregations tolerated among us, with a number of preachers zealously employed in the propagation of these doctrines which we have examined, and weakening those motives, which the Scriptures hold forth to us for the observation of the moral law in the Ten Commandments; which is so fully explained, and particularly enforced, in the writings of Emanuel Swedenborg.

THE END.



